



LEAD WARNING

Lead Can Poison Your Child

Understanding Your Child's Lead Test

The amount of lead found in a child's blood is called the blood lead level. Performing a blood lead test tells us how much lead (in micrograms: μg or mcg) is in a child's blood (per deciliter: dL). The blood lead level will tell how much lead your child has been exposed to in the last few months. **There is no totally safe level of lead for children.**

To find out how much lead is in a child's blood, a small amount of blood is taken from the child's arm or finger. Taking blood from a child's finger is called a finger-stick or a capillary test. The test being performed today is a capillary test. The results will be available in about five minutes.

The other test in which blood is taken from an arm vein (venous blood test) involves drawing blood into a tube and sending it to a lab. There could be a wait-time of several days to receive the results back from the lab. If your child's lead level is considered high, you may be asked to follow up on today's capillary test with a venous blood test, which can be more accurate. Turn this card over for an explanation of your child's test results.

Learn more about how to prevent lead poisoning by calling:

Washington State Childhood Lead Poisoning hotline: **1-800-909-9898**

Washington State Department of Health: **www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/lead**



What do the test results mean?

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Below 5 µg/dL

This is a typical blood lead level. However, be aware of risk factors around your home and environment to avoid exposure to lead. Remember to wash your child's hands often, especially before meals and after playing outside. If you live in or spend a lot of time in a house that was built before 1978, regularly inspect the home for signs of chipping, peeling or deteriorating paint. Lead absorption is increased when there is not enough iron or calcium in a child's diet. Give your child healthy foods, high in calcium, iron and vitamin C, and low in fat.

5–9 µg/dL

This level is slightly above average, but no medical treatment is needed. You should take steps to identify possible sources of lead in your child's environment in order to prevent any further exposure. If you live in or spend a lot of time in a house that was built before 1978, regularly inspect the home for signs of chipping, peeling or deteriorating paint. Remember to wash your child's hands often, especially before meals and after playing outside. Lead absorption is increased when there is not enough iron or calcium in a child's diet. Give your child healthy foods, high in calcium, iron and vitamin C, and low in fat.

10 µg/dL or higher

A level of ten or above is considered high. Please contact your doctor to follow up with a venous blood test. Since the test performed on your child today was a capillary test, a venous blood lead test (from an arm vein) should be taken as soon as possible to confirm the blood lead level. The higher the blood lead level on the capillary test, the more urgent the need for a confirmation test. Children can be hurt by lead and may not look or act sick. If the lead level doesn't drop down, some children can experience permanent health problems.

You need to identify and remove possible lead hazards. Your local health department may contact you and schedule a home visit to help you identify lead hazards. Feed your child a diet that will help protect them from lead. Lead absorption is increased when there is not enough iron or calcium in a child's diet. Serve foods high in calcium, iron, and vitamin C and low in fat. **Remember to wash your child's hands often, especially before meals and after playing outside.**

Visit www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/lead for more information.

 **Health**
Washington State Department of
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Sincerely,
Health Education Resource Exchange Web Team

P R I N T I N G S P E C I F I C A T I O N S

Title: **Understanding Your Child's Lead Test** (card)

Size: 8.5 x 5.5

Paper stock: 80# cover Sterling gloss white

Ink color: 4-color process

Special instructions: 2-sided printing, full bleeds

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